

apology for pinching pennies on veterans health benefits when these brave soldiers return home? Where is the apology for the immoral doctrine of this preemptive war? And where is the apology for the gross deceptions used to justify it, for the missing weapons of mass destruction, for the cooked intelligence, for the phony al Qaeda-Sadam link?

Where is the apology for wasting more than \$200 billion of taxpayer money on this mistake? Where is the apology for the poor leadership that led to torture and prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo? Where is the apology for committing our troops and our Nation to this mission without a post-war plan to secure the peace? And where is the apology for the arrogance that squandered international good will toward America and damaged our relationships with our closest allies?

There is something wrong with our moral compass if we have to apologize for speaking bluntly. But our leaders can commit the biggest foreign policy blunder since Vietnam and get away without apology or accountability.

Actually, an apology would not be enough for everything they have done. An apology, after all, is just more words. It is time for action. It is time for accountability. It is time for a tangible admission that the Iraq war was immorally conceived and has been incompetently managed. It is clearly time to end this war and bring our troops home.

CHUCK HAGEL, the senior Senator from Nebraska, a decorated Vietnam hero and a member of the President's party, recently had this to say about the war, "Things aren't getting better. They are getting worse. The White House is completely disconnected from reality. It's like they're just making it up as they go along. The reality is that we are losing Iraq."

I ask you, are they going to ask CHUCK HAGEL for an apology? After all, he has done the worst possible thing in the eyes of the administration: he has told the truth.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

#### WOMEN AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-

LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak about women and Social Security reform.

President Bush is exploring different ways to save Social Security for future generations. And as the mother of two young daughters, I realize that we must tackle this inevitable reform of Social Security now and not defer the debate to future generations. I applaud the President for his strong leadership and his vision.

Women have a particularly large stake in Social Security reform; and I thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE), for her leadership on this issue, and we will hear from her later tonight. Social Security may be actually reflecting a bygone America where most American women worked at home and received a spousal benefit based on their husband's earnings.

Today, according to the Government Accountability Office, nearly 60 percent of American women participate in the labor force which helps make America the most productive economy in the world. Not only are more women working than when Social Security was formulated; they are working in ways that the framers of this program could not have imagined. The GAO has also found that women are more likely to work part time and work intermittently as they may take time out of the labor force to rear children or care for their elderly parents.

However, Social Security as currently formulated penalizes many of these working women. For example, a homemaker can receive a higher spousal benefit than a woman working in a low-wage job receives based upon her own earnings. In some cases, the household benefit from Social Security is no greater than if these women had never worked at all.

The fact is that under the current system, Social Security earnings cannot be transferred or shifted should a woman unfortunately become a widow. Sadly, this occurs all too often and a woman's total household income can be greatly reduced if she was receiving benefits based on the earnings while her husband was alive, compared to a widow whose benefits are based solely on her husband's earnings. So Social Security should not penalize women in their old age because they decided to join the workforce rather than stay at home.

Social Security must be reformed to better protect women and the invaluable roles that they play in our economy and in our society. We should reward those women who try to balance work in the home and work in the labor force and not ask them to choose one or the other. By reforming Social Security to include private accounts, we can ensure that women receive all of the benefits that they earn in the workplace as well as being entitled to

those that their husbands have earned once they have passed on. Forty percent of elderly women in America rely on Social Security for 90 percent of their income.

I join President Bush in assuring elderly women that Social Security reform will not impact their benefits by one penny. At the same time, the reforms that President Bush has envisioned will safeguard Social Security for those women's grandchildren and for all of our children and grandchildren. If we do not reform it, Social Security will be a pay-as-you-go system which is doomed to fail.

In the 1940s, as we have heard many times when Social Security was designed, there were 41 workers paying into the system for every person who was receiving benefits. Today there are only about three workers for every one person receiving benefits. By the year 2042 when workers who are currently in their mid-20s begin to retire, the system will be bankrupt. If we do not reform Social Security, those of us who are drawing or who will draw benefits will be doing so at the expense of our offsprings' future.

Without reform, we would also continue to penalize our daughters and our grandchildren for mixing a career in the workforce with a dedication to family life. Also, 2.3 million Hispanics receive Social Security benefits and 41 percent, a majority of them women, depend on it as their full source of income.

As the first Hispanic woman elected to Congress, I am committed to ensuring that all women are protected and all are afforded every opportunity. Remember, we are talking about American women here, not Republican women, not Democrat women, but American women. Social Security reform is too important an issue to be left to partisan politics.

#### SAVE SOCIAL SECURITY FIRST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, today some Members of the Republican Party, House and Senate, unveiled a proposal to use a surplus in the Social Security trust fund for private accounts. And they said that in their words, we are going to keep the Social Security surplus Social Security.

Well, that is interesting. For the last 3 years my colleagues on the other side said there was never ever a surplus in Social Security; there were no accounts in Social Security. In fact, just a month ago or a little more than a month ago, the President of the United States went to West Virginia, unveiled an old filing cabinet, if I am using his words correctly, and said, look at it. That is the Social Security surplus. As I quote him, and this is the President, "There is no Social Security trust fund. Just IOUs stacked in a filing cabinet."